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MEMORANDUM FOR: D/NFAC

The attached is the fifth in a series of memoranda that summarize Soviet global activities that affect US interests. Dr. Brzezinski requested this bimonthly series last summer and stressed that he wanted to receive it on a regular basis. We have since learned from Marshall Brement (the Soviet expert on Brzezinski's staff) that the NSC finds the product useful.

This memorandum has been approved by NIO/USSR-EE.

Helene L. Boatner
Director
Political Analysis

Date 15 June 1980

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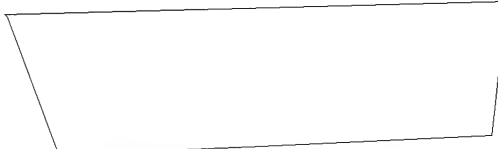
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

17 JUN 1980

**MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable Zbigniew Brzezinski
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs**

**SUBJECT : Soviet Activities Affecting US
Interests**

This is the fifth in a series of reports that chart the USSR's actions to advance their interests abroad. It gives special attention to those activities that either seem deliberately designed to counter US policy or have the potential for developing into issues inimical to US interests.



Bruce C. Clarke, Jr.

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**Attachment:
As stated**

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
National Foreign Assessment Center

15 June 1980

MEMORANDUMSoviet Activities Affecting US Interests

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Summary

Soviet leaders probably believe that they have made considerable progress in limiting international damage as a result of the invasion of Afghanistan and in habituating the international community to a long-term Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. Last month's meeting with French President Giscard and the scheduled meeting with West German Chancellor Schmidt later this month allowed the Soviets to demonstrate a high-level political dialogue with the key states of West Europe despite the Afghan invasion and the US "quarantine." The Soviets probably also believe that they did not do badly at the second Islamic Conference in view of the fact that the US bore the brunt of criticism at last month's meeting and that there were signs that the Moslem consensus on Afghanistan was weakening.

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This memorandum was prepared by the USSR-East European Division of the Office of Political Analysis. Comments may be addressed to

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[REDACTED]

With prospects for resuming detente with the US poor, the Soviets are encouraging West Europeans to engage in a political dialogue that involves such sensitive Third World areas as Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, and the Middle East. Moscow is trying to show the West that it understands Western concern for the security of Middle East oil routes and that the invasion of Afghanistan was not intended to threaten the control of the region's resources. The Soviets will in turn exploit any US unwillingness to enter a direct dialogue on these sensitive issues in their discussions with the West Europeans. [REDACTED]

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Regardless of Washington's level of enthusiasm for Soviet proposals to inaugurate a high-level dialogue over outstanding political differences, the Soviets will maintain a propaganda campaign against the US. The Soviets consider the campaign particularly important for their propaganda efforts in Europe and for support of their efforts to drive a wedge between the US and some of its more important European allies. Playing on the fears of some West European leaders, the Soviets will blame the US for destabilizing the international situation and for refusing to restore the atmosphere of detente. [REDACTED]

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Damage Limitation in the Aftermath of Afghanistan

Moscow's success in limiting the damage of its invasion of Afghanistan is probably a source of satisfaction in the Kremlin. The Soviets have reason to believe that they have seen the worst of West European and Islamic reaction and that their ability to hold high-level political discussions with West European leaders is symptomatic of the divergence in US and West European policies toward the USSR. These meetings allow the Soviets to try to enlarge the existing divergencies between the US and its allies.

- The summit with Giscard produced no movement on the issue of Afghanistan, but it eased the way for the Schmidt visit to the USSR later this month.
- The meetings with Schmidt will provide an opportunity to exploit Bonn's concern with the direction of US policy and to portray Bonn and Moscow as interested in lessening international tensions and buttressing detente.
- Swedish Foreign Minister Ullsten's visit in May and the scheduling of Norwegian Foreign Minister Frydenlund are additional examples of Moscow's ability to conduct "business as usual" with the West Europeans without US approval or participation.

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The Soviets will use all of these occasions to try to exploit US-West European differences over Middle East peacekeeping issues, the appropriate response to the Iran and Afghanistan crises, the modernization of theater nuclear forces, and European security issues. []

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The Soviets similarly have reason to believe that they did not do badly at last month's Islamic Conference in Islamabad, where the consensus on Afghanistan that was hammered out in January showed signs of weakening. The conference failed to issue a new condemnation of the USSR, and several radical Arab states expressed reservations about the January condemnation. The Soviets were also pleased by the fact that the Afghan rebels failed to gain recognition at the conference and are probably hopeful that a newly formed Islamic committee will lead to greater acceptance of the Babrak Karmal government. Even the Iranians--Moscow's harshest critic--admitted that the committee must enter into some kind of dialogue with Kabul. More importantly, the Soviets probably took comfort in the fact that the US came in for the lion's share of criticism at the meetings, where US rescue efforts were equated with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. []

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The Soviets have had the least success in countering the adverse effect of the US trade embargo, particularly the grain embargo, and the Olympic boycott, which have caused unexpected expenditure of hard currency and some loss of international prestige. No single aspect of US retaliation appears to have bothered the Soviets unduly, but Washington's across-the-board response caught the Soviet leadership off guard. The disruption these actions have caused may be responsible for the recent increase in propaganda activities and forgeries aimed at the US. []

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Soviet Search for Dialogue

The Soviets presumably want to use their contacts with the West Europeans not only to divide the US from its allies but to encourage Washington to enter a political dialogue with Moscow as well. Moscow's pitch is twofold: to establish that the USSR is willing to discuss the breakdown in relations with the US in a serious fashion but that Washington remains intransigent; to convince the West Europeans that US overemphasis on Afghanistan is having deleterious effects on the delicate balance in Europe. In this way, the Soviets hope either to get their dialogue with the US eventually or at least to establish that Washington is responsible for the failure to do so. []

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[REDACTED]

Soviet probes on guaranteeing the security of the oil routes of the Persian Gulf are designed to project a sympathetic pose toward the West and, at the same time, to assert a comparable interest and gain a possible negotiation forum on Persian Gulf issues. Last month's Warsaw Pact proposal on "unhindered access to the main international sea routes" was an effort, for example, to keep alive the idea of East-West negotiations on the security of oil routes and to generate some interest among the nonaligned states. The proposal has not elicited much response from the West thus far, but the Soviets are likely to try other variations on the theme of East-West negotiations to protect the oil routes, if only to convince the West Europeans that it is the US--not the USSR--which jeopardizes the stability of the Persian Gulf area and access to its oil resources. This tactic is particularly important to the Soviet effort to drive a wedge between the US and its allies. [REDACTED]

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Presumably the Soviets also see opportunities for inserting themselves into the Arab-Israeli settlement process by exploiting the Egyptian-Israeli impasse and playing up to both Arab and European desires for new initiatives for a settlement. Before the invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet officials condemned the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. More recently, however, Soviet foreign ministry officials have hinted that the USSR may be considering a tactical shift in their approach to Middle East peace negotiations, which could presage Soviet efforts to exploit US-West European differences over the role of the Palestinians in the peace process and the use of US political leverage against Israel. Brezhnev recently referred publicly to the need to return to "collective efforts" by all of the interested parties in the Middle East, particularly the US and the USSR, and the deputy chief of the foreign ministry's Near East Department privately indicated that the return of the Sinai and the establishment of Egyptian-Israeli diplomatic relations could be accepted as the foundations for building a comprehensive settlement. [REDACTED]

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New Opportunities

The Soviets have already intensified their activity in Latin America, which is designed in part to exploit the worsening of relations between the US and key Latin American states. The Soviets no longer appear to be constrained by the need to placate Washington in its own backyard and, as a result, have offered military training to the new radical government in Grenada and have concluded several assistance agreements with Nicaragua. There is also the possibility that the Soviets will provide weapons through third parties to leftists in El Salvador. Moscow has also gained from the refusal of

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[REDACTED]

Argentina and Brazil to join US efforts to restrict grain sales to the USSR, and the Soviets will intensify their contacts with these key states. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets will also press to advance their interests in areas where they have previously been excluded. Jordan's King Hussein has agreed to visit the USSR following the Olympics, and the Soviets will use the occasion to lobby for Jordanian purchases of Soviet weaponry. Both Libya and Algeria have reportedly tied their subsidies to Amman to purchases of Soviet arms. In the wake of Moscow's emphasis on guaranteed access to the oil of the Persian Gulf, Kuwait announced that it would be willing to sell oil to the Soviets for hard currency. [REDACTED]

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The Soviets in any event intend to increase the volume of the current propaganda campaign against Washington.

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[REDACTED] the Soviet campaign will be directed primarily against President Carter and Zbigniew Brzezinski in order to blame them for the current decline in East-West relations. The Soviets consider the campaign important for their propaganda efforts in Europe (particularly in West Germany) and for support of their efforts to drive a wedge between the US and some of its more important European allies. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Soviet Activities Affecting US Interests

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